

CONTACT: Mick Hans, (312) 353-5050
Dave Novak, (312) 886-7478

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE No. 05-OPA088

***EPA FINDS NO ASBESTOS IN DEARBORN RESIDENTIAL AREAS;
MEETING JUNE 15, 6:30 P.M.***

CHICAGO (June 7, 2005) — U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 5 has completed its recent investigation of potential asbestos contamination in Dearborn, Mich., residential areas — finding no contaminated material. On a separate track, cleanups of contaminated soil at the site of the former W.R. Grace facility in Dearborn, along with a strip of public land near the facility, have recently been completed.

A public meeting to discuss the \$500,000 project is set for Wednesday, June 15, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Fordson High School auditorium, 13800 Ford Road, in Dearborn. EPA officials, along with representatives from Michigan Department of Community Health and local government agencies, will provide an update and answer questions about the work.

W.R. Grace operated a vermiculite-processing plant at 14300 Henn St. from the early 1950s until 1989. These operations produced waste material contaminated with asbestos. An unrelated business now operates at the site. In the course of

- more -

investigating a number of former Grace facilities around the United States, EPA found soil contamination on the Henn Street property. This past March and April, EPA extended its investigation to nearby residential yards in case material from the Grace plant had been used by area residents to fill in yards or driveways.

“Over the course of the project, EPA visited 1,030 homes and businesses, conducted 258 interviews, inspected 163 yards and sampled 50 yards,” said Regional Superfund Director Richard Karl. “We are especially grateful to the Arab Community Center and our other local partners that helped us reach out to residents who are not native English-speakers.”

***EPA FINDS NO ASBESTOS IN DEARBORN RESIDENTIAL AREAS; MEETING JUNE 15, 6:30 P.M. —
page 2***

Though no asbestos contamination was found in the residential yards, EPA learned that a public median directly west of the former Grace plant, next to Sarkozi Field, was not replaced when the field was resurfaced in 1999. Sampling at the median confirmed very low asbestos levels and, as a precautionary measure, the material was excavated and replaced with clean soil and landscaping. At the former Grace site, EPA removed 1,450 cubic yards of contaminated soil, installed a liner at the bottom of the excavated area, and backfilled it with clean soil. The contaminated soil was sent to the Sauk Trails Development Landfill in Canton Township.

One project remains before EPA closes out the Dearborn work: A small strip of CSX Transportation's railroad right-of-way next to the former Grace plant will be excavated in the next several weeks.

Residents with questions about the project or who need special accommodations at the meeting may contact EPA Community Involvement Coordinator Dave Novak, (800) 621-8431, ext 67478, during business hours.

#